



Dipadeedoodah!

A SHORT NOTE FROM BRER PHIL

'Ello everyone! (Does anyone know who Carl Haas is?) I am writing this as I type on May 2nd, and three players have failed to submit orders. What to do, what to do. Of course I want what's best for the game, which would be to wait forever until these people get their respective acts together, but then you'd be seeing an issue every three months, and you already know how much I hate that idea. NMR's are distasteful, too. Only backstabbing, nearby allies benefit from this, and they don't deserve any help. So what to do?

Well, my friends, life's rough. If you cannot find enough time to jot down several cryptic scribblings like "A Bur-Ruh" and "F Ion S F Aeg", then you had better just give up on life now. (NOTE: this is not intended to encourage suicide.) I recommend that if you're one of those I'm talking about, try this: as soon as you receive a given issue, look at the results from the previous turn, and *immediately* mail in orders for the current turn. You can always supercede them later. This would prevent any NMR's from happening due to carelessness (but not total disinterest).

On a much more positive note, I mentioned earlier that I will be spending most of the rest of the year away from Sarasota. I will be at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville) from roughly May 29 to August 4, participating in a summer research program for computer science majors, with the work I do there becoming the start of my senior thesis required for graduation from New College of USF. After visiting some friends in the Maryland area for a week or so, it will be on to the University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa) for off-campus study in the fall (and lots of much-wanted programming classes! Go Gators! OOPS — I mean Tide!). I will continue to work on my thesis while there, roughly from August 20 to December 20.

In either case, I won't know until I'm there what my address or phone # will be. So until further notice, *continue sending orders and other material to my Sarasota address. Orders for the next deadline must be RECEIVED by the June 1 deadline.* They will be forwarded to me in Knoxville. *Telephone orders will NOT be accepted this time.*

Is that clear enough? See the big sign to the right if it isn't. Send in your orders early — don't get careless.

BEST PRESS

I would like to start getting opinions from readers on the best item of press in each issue. Hopefully, such a practice may encourage others to write good press (maybe even *some* press). If nothing else, the cudos will go to the author's head, give him feelings of grandeur, make him overextend his position in the game, and become just so many pick-up supply centers for his neighbors. So be a good citizen and vote to the downfall of your enemy!

My personal favorites: for the April issue, Paul Milewski's "RUSSIA: I feel like a very large vegetable about to become puree..."; and for the May issue, Matt Grasse's "RUSSIA TO ITALY: Now that it's over, why not be a man and throw a punch at the Frenchie. Even whores get fed up after a while. (And fed.)". What do you think?

LATE-BREAKING HOBBY NEWS...

... The new NAVB (North American Variant Bank) coordinator is: Lee Kendter, Jr., 264 Spruce Ct., Bensalem, PA 19020. A new catalog is in the works and should be available next month.

... As of July 1, 1989, the new BNC (Boardman Number Custodian) will be: Don Williams, 1521 West Ave., J-8 #163, Lancaster, CA 93534.

... The BNC-sponsored publication, Everything..., contains information on the hobby and gamestarts during the past year, as well as the results of a GM survey. Send \$1.00 to the publisher, Melinda Holley (address on the back page of this issue).

... Zine Register #14 has been delayed but should be available next month. It contains information and quasi-reviews of most of the zines currently being published. Send 75¢ to: Ken Peel, 8708 First Ave. # T-2, Silver Spring, MD 20910. It's easily worth it.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE:

JUNE 1, 1989

**(MAILED ORDERS MUST BE RECEIVED
BY THIS DATE -- NO EXCEPTIONS --
TELEPHONE ORDERS NOT ALLOWED!)**

GAME OPENINGS

Asian Diplomacy II (\$5) — 2 of 7 positions filled. (C'mon, guys! If we can get 4 more people, I may be able to persuade the original Asian Dip designer Kate Robison to make it seven!) *Illuminati* (5\$) — 2-5 of 3-6 positions filled. (I have some interested but uncommitted (i.e. unpaid) players signed up for this. Many are waiting for my rules, which should be available around early June. But sign on now — don't miss the bus!)

STANDBYS LIST

Current standbys are indicated in the "Player Info" list printed somewhere in this issue. As always, standbys pay no extra fees to pick up an abandoned position — you just have to be subbing to or trading for this zine. Call the collect phone number now!

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Subscriptions are \$9.00 for 12 (on-time) monthly issues (that's equivalent to 75¢ per issue for you tightwads who think \$9.00 per year is too much). If you're wavering, you had better sub now before prices possibly rise!

INTERSTELLAR PIG

I am giving some consideration to a game which would be quite different, I think, from those currently being offered — anywhere! It's called "Interstellar Pig" after the novel of the same name by William Sleator, written just a few years ago. Has anyone else read it? I found it thoroughly delightful. It's really "juvenile" science fiction, and I had sensations of curiosity, suspense, and excitement like I haven't had since reading the likes of The Wizard of Oz and Tom Sawyer. (Well, I never actually read either, but you get the idea.)

The story revolves around a young boy spending the summer with his parents in a rented cabin. One day, the neighbors move in, and they are quite a strange bunch. Ultimately, the boy gets invited to play their board game, Interstellar Pig, a role-playing board game in which players fight and track down each other through the universe to find the Piggy, since only the extraterrestrial holding the Piggy when the alarm goes off survives (and by extension, his species, too). What the boy is slow to realize is that a *real* game of Interstellar Pig is being played at the universal level, and that the extraterrestrial neighbors have come to this specific location on Earth with the knowledge that the *real* Piggy is located somewhere nearby...!

I get the distinct feeling that William Sleator must have created a more or less working version of his game (maybe for his kids to play). I have written to him to see if he can offer any assistance to me, since as it stands I would have to cull the book for little tidbits of information, and fill in the gaps where there are none to offer. But the basic play of the game (at least PBM-wise) would allow for 3-6 players, each of which selects some extraterrestrial creature to represent (and there's all sorts), or possibly designs his own. A board or map would be given, showing each player's home planet, etc.. "Cards" would be distributed evenly to each: these represent special attributes or powers (e.g. Shapeshifting), important items (such as a methane breathing apparatus), and special play cards (like Time Warp, Hyperspace, etc.). Then, whenever it is necessary, I would write descriptive accounts of play, battle, and the like, and the whole thing would kind of read like a juvenile science fiction story (not surprisingly).

Are you still with me? Anybody interested? I'm sure there are role-playing card games out there somewhere which are very similar — if you know of any, please tell me. But this would be specifically for play-by-mail. I plan to have a rough set of rules around June, and any inquiries or suggestions are welcome.

A TOOTSIE POP FOR YOUR THOUGHTS...

I am currently running an experiment for my cognitive psychology class that deals specifically with cognitive maps. That is, the idea that we get around in our environment by calling up from memory some kind of "mental map" to help in navigational tasks.

Although I am running subjects and asking each the following question, I would really like to hear an answer from you, too. (Just for my information — it won't be used for the experiment.) The question: When considering how to get from someplace very familiar (e.g. home) to someplace which you have visited infrequently, do you ever have the sensation of seeing the destination first and then working your way "backwards" from it to more familiar landmarks and roads until you reach a point to which it is obvious how to obtain from home?

ON GENETIC ALGORITHMS

Some people have asked me about "genetic algorithms", and just what the heck are they? Well, I will try to give a *very* watered-down explanation. (It's about the only kind I know how to give anyway!).

Genetic algorithms are basically search algorithms based on principle of evolution and natural selection. Maybe a comparison-by-contrast to other search schemes will help to explain. The simplest search technique is the enumerative or "brute-force" method: that's like searching for "John Smith's" address in the phone book by starting on page 1 with the A's, looking at each name, turning to page 2, and — well, you see the inefficiency of this. An alternative search strategy, though generally not much better, is the random search. Everybody is familiar with this one. That's like being blindfolded and throwing darts at a map on the wall to find out what state the city of "Frostproof" is in. (Not surprisingly, it's in Florida.)

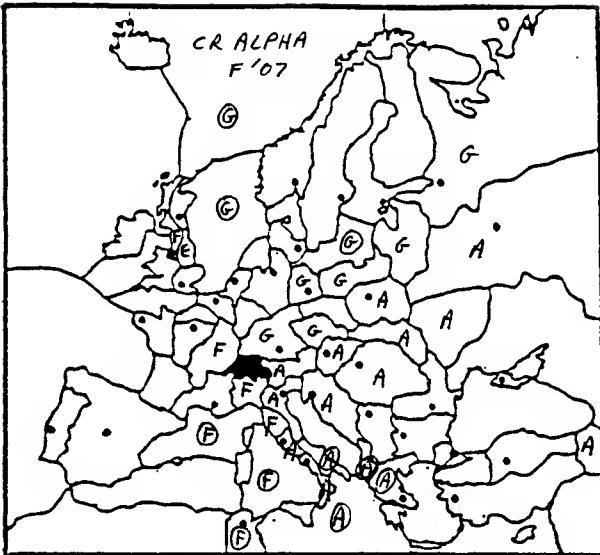
Of course, there are many problem-specific search techniques, but it may be desirable to have a more general search technique combining elements of the random search (so as not to get "stuck" in your search) with a more adaptive approach: in this way the same algorithm can be used to tackle a multitude of different problems. The genetic algorithm is such an adaptive stochastic (i.e. random-based) technique.

How does it work? Again, a (relatively) simplified version. Possible solutions are coded as fixed-length strings (often binary numbers), forming a "generation". In the "reproduction and mating" phase, highly-fit strings (i.e. those with good payoffs) are selected in pairs, with the best performing strings represented in many pairs. Some information from each member in a given pair is swapped with the other, in effect creating "offspring" sharing characteristics of both "parents". These offspring form the new "population" for the next generation, when their performance will be evaluated, continuing the cycle until some kind of steady-state or "good enough" solution is obtained. When this is done over many generations, you find the bad bits of information being bred out of the population, and the good ones carrying on, like a survival of the fittest, with each "individual" containing pieces of information which make it adaptive to the "niche" (i.e. problem) at hand.

Admittedly, some of the analogies to nature and evolution are stretched, but the idea is that if nature can come up with some good "solutions" (presumably us, the human species), then we ought to be able to have some algorithm which can do the same thing for assorted problems. I know it sounds neat to me, which is why I made it my thesis topic. As to the particular issue I want to focus upon, I'll probably know better after Knoxville. It will probably involve machine learning of some sort. It seems, as my interest in mathematics wanes, and my interest in cognitive psychology waxes, that the field of artificial intelligence and machine learning is likely to be my focus in graduate school, should I decide to go that far (and it is likely I will).

Whew!! Got all that? There will be a quiz in the next issue, so you had better study hard!

I know this may sound kind of vague, but I think those people who would truthfully say "yes" will know what I mean. As with all my subjects, I'll give (mail, in this case?) a tootsie pop of their favorite flavor to anyone who participates. (Well, how about if you treat yourself to one — i.e. *you* go and pay for it!)



CR ALPHA -- FALL 1907

SOME PAIN, NO GAIN —
EVERYONE STAYS EVEN THIS TIME AROUND

AUS (Reid): A Gal r-> Rum; A Mos S A War, A War S A Mos, A Rum-Gal, A Ukr S A Rum-Gal, A Bud S A Vie, A Vie S A Bud, A Trl S A Vie, A Ven S A Trl, A Alb-Tri, A Rom S A Nap, A Nap S A Rom, A Smy-Arm, F Ion S A Nap, F Adr-Apu, F Gre-Alb, F Aeg-Gre

ENG (Engler): A Yor-Lon

FRA (D. Wilson): A Edi-Lpl, A Mar-Pie, A Tun-Tus, A Bur S GERMAN A Mun, F Wes-Tun, F Tys C A Tun-Tus, F Lyo S A Mar-Pie

GER (Grasse): A Stp-Mos, A Lvn S A Stp-Mos, A Gal-Vie, A Boh S A Mun-Trl, A Mun-Trl, A Ber-Pru, A Kie-Ber, F Bal S A Ber-Pru, F Nth-Lon, F Bar-Nws; ** A Gal r-> Sil?

Adjustments...

AUS (16): Home, Turkey, Italy, Mos, Sev, War, Rum, Bul, Gre, Ser ...+0

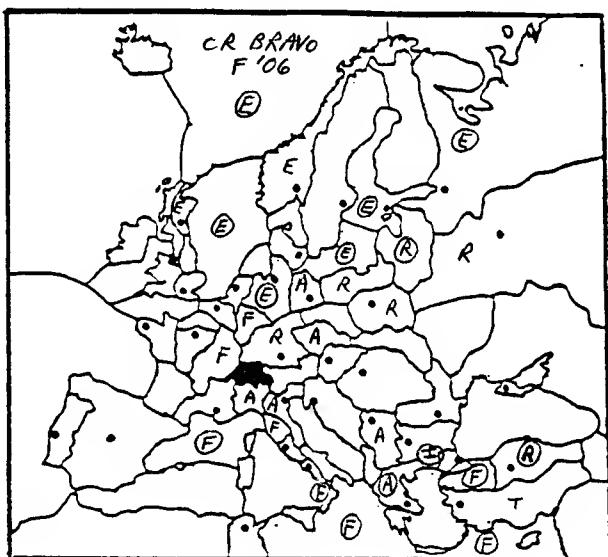
ENG (1): Edi ...+0

FRA (7): Home, Por, Spa, Lpl, Tun ...+0

GER (10): Home, Hol, Bel, Den, Lon, Nwy, Swe, Stp ...+0

GERMANY TO ENGLAND: I'm afraid you're mistaken, London is mine. Just ask and Duke of Windsor you happen to meet.

GERMANY: Who could have possibly suggested drawing or conceding this game before it was over? Could it have been... um, let's say... SATAN!!?



CR BRAVO -- FALL 1906

DIPLOMACY SQUARE DANCE —
"ALL CHANGE SUPPLY CENTERS!"

AUS (vanDok): A Pie-Ven, A Gal-Boh, A Ven-Rom, A Ber S RUSSIAN A Sil-Mun, A Ser S F Alb-Gre, F Alb-Gre

ENG (Todd): F Ber r-> Kie; A Yor-Edi, A Edi-Nwy, F Nth C A Edi-Nwy, F Nws S A Edi-Nwy, F Stp(nc) S A Edi-Nwy, F Bot S F Stp(ne), F Bal-Lvn, F Kie S FRENCH A Mun-Ber

FRA (Sweeney): A Pie r-> Tus; A Tus-Rom, A Bur-Mar, A Ruh-Mun, A Mun-Ber, F Lyo-Mar, F Tys-Ion, F Rom-Nap, F Aeg-Con, F Eas S TURKISH A Arm-Smy; ** A Mun r-> Trl?

ITA (Weiss): F Gre-Bul(sc)

RUS (Grasse): A Nwy-Stp, A Mos S A Nwy-Stp, A War S A Pru, A Pru S AUSTRIAN A Ber, A Sil-Mun, F Con-Ank, F Lvn S A Nwy-Stp; ** A Nwy r-> Swe, Fin?

TUR (Lord): A Arm-Smy

We have a slight problem here... Russia must retreat or disband its A Nwy. If it is retreated to Swe, then the adjustments chart as given below is correct. If another option is chosen, then England retains control of Sweden, and thus England would get 1 build while Russia would have to disband 1 unit (potentially the retreating one). Got it? All players can write conditional orders on any of these possibilities for their spring orders.

There is also a proposal to concede the game to the Anglo-French alliance. All players must explicitly vote "yes" for this to pass and end the game.

Adjustments...

AUS (7): Home, Ven, Ser, Gre, Ber, Mun ...+1

ENG (8): Home, Hol, Den, Nwy, Kie, Stp, Swe, War, Ber ...+0

FRA (9): Home, Por, Spa, Tun, Bel, Nap, Con, Kie ...+0

ITA (2): Rom, Bul, Gre ...+1

RUS (7): Mos, Sev, Rum, War, Ank, Mun, Swe, Stp, Bul, Con, Smy ...+0

TUR (1): Smy, Ank ...+0

GREECE TO ANONYMOUS: I lied like a rug and got walked all over. Now I'm being beaten after being hanged-up. The twisting in the wind should be over soon, sister.

ANONYMOUS: Austrian Foreign Policy: "Uh, well, gee, ok, I think?"

ANONYMOUS: Who will Austria align with next week? Tune in and see! Same bat time...!

LON TO MOS: Of course we're liars, you're just sore cause we're good liars!

BRER PHIL: "Everything I say is a lie..."

RUSSIA TO TURKEY: Aw, c'mon Turkey! Why don't you wanna make nice with me?

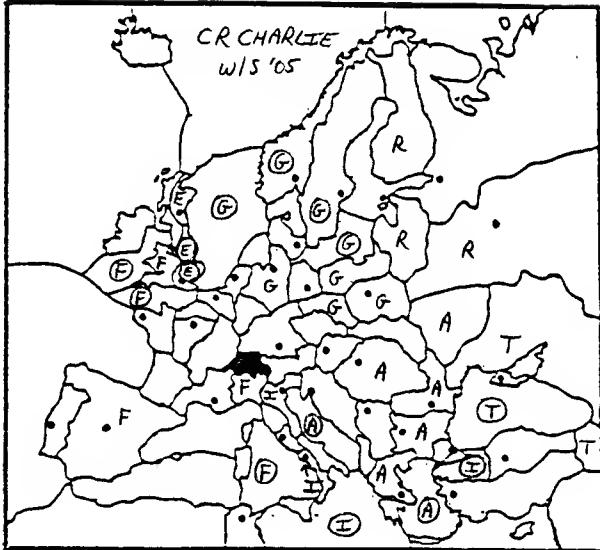
LON TO EUROPE: My new book, How to Con a Russian, should hit the stands in May. \$6.00 hardcover, \$3.95 paperback. I'm working on the sequel, The Art of Cutting Grasse.

ANONYMOUS: The Sweeney Todd Sausage Co. — "Makers of fine European sausages."

RUSSIA TO FRANCE: Ha! Looks like Brer Phil got your number. Pauvre petit moi!

RUSSIA TO ITALY: Now that it's over, why not be a man and throw a punch at the Frenchie. Even whores get fed up after a while. (And fed.)

BRER PHIL: *Ouch!*



CR CHARLIE -- WINTER/SPRING 1905

*FRANCE INVADES ENGLAND,
RUSSIA IS ON THE RUN FROM GERMAN HOARDS,
AUSTRIA AND ITALY HAVE A LITTLE BIT OF TURKEY*

AUS (Armstrong): Build F Tri; A Gal-Ukr, A Rum S A Gal-Ukr, A Bud S A Rum, A Gre S A Bul, A Bul S ITALIAN F Smy-Con, F Aeg S ITALIAN F Smy-Con, F Tri-Adr

ENG (Reid): A Edi H, F Lon-Eng, F Yor S A Edi

FRA (Grasse): A Pic-Wal, A Spa H, A Mar-Pie, F Eng C A Pic-Wal, F Tun-Tys, F Mid-Iri

GER (D. Wilson): Build F Kie; A Sil-War, A Pru S A Sil-War, A Ber-Sil, A Hol-Kie, F Nwy-Stp(nc), F Kie-Bal, K Ska-Swe, F Nth-Nwy

ITA (vanDok): Build A Rom; A Rom-Nap, A Ven H, F Smy-Con, F Nap-Ion

RUS (Milewski): Disband A Sev, F Nws; A Ukr-Mos, A War-Lvn, A Fin-Stp

TUR (B. Wilson): Disband F Con; A Sev-Rum, A Arm-Sev, F Bla S A Sev-Rum

VIENNA TO LONDON: Give our regards to Admiral Custer.

DATELINE VIENNA: By popular demand, the Vienna Philharmonic staged another performance of Mozart's "Die Entfaltung Aus Dem Serail" (the one about the Turkish harcm). However, this performance had an unusual twist when Belmonte and Constanze are rescued from Sultan Osmin by Austro-Italian troops. The opera ended with a rousing chorus of, "Ding, dong, the wicked witch is dead."

ANKARA: *Ga, ga...*

MOSCOW TO WHAT IS LEFT OF TURKEY: [illegible]

BRER PHIL: A note for all. Last issue I typed "<illegible>", not because Brad had written that, but because his handwriting really was illegible. Moscow's "[illegible]" above is of his own doing, not mine.

PARIS: Nothing new to report. These western wars need some spicing up.

MARSEILLES: Maybe some organo...

PARIS TO MARSEILLES: *DOG!!* Speak only when you are spoken to! Got that?

MARSEILLES: Up yours! Who do you think you are... *THE POPE??!*

ANKARA TO ROME: Look out!

SPAIN: Oh boy! This is getting exciting. I can't wait till the next issue.

NO LULLABY -- FOG OF WAR VARIANT

-- FALL 1901

WOULDNT YOU LIKE TO KNOW?

AUS (Mann)
ENG (Munzenmaier)
FRA (Phillips)
GER (Grasse)
ITA (Sweeney)
RUS (Weiss)
TUR (D. Wilson)

ROME TO ANONYMOUS: If you're going to insult all your enemies in all your games, you shouldn't do so simultaneously and with the same nom de plume! (You wonder why you can't find game-long allies -- it's because of things like this!) Why must you cross-game? (Where's the *fun*?)

MOSCOW TO MUNICH: Why did you go east? The phrase is, "Westward ho the wagons".

BERLIN: The Kaiser was officially replaced as sovereign of Germany by a virtual unknown who goes by the name of Raines, Claude Raines.

MOSCOW TO SEVEN BLIND MEN FEELING AN ELEPHANT: Fog of War looks like an Italian fleet submarine Tunis.

A NEIGHBOR TO THE SULTAN: No, no, let's you and I get the *other* guy!

GERMANY TO THE WORLD: To all of those to whom we have written and from whom we have not as yet received any reply (and you all know who you are), we can only state that if pen and paper are so expensive in your countries, then you can request to make a purchase in the Deutschland. It's not so bad here!

ANONYMOUS TO PARIS: I don't understand the blips on my radar screen.

GERMANY TO THE WORLD: For anyone who is interested, England has a fleet in the North Sea.

ROME TO THE WORLD: Actually, Roy Fleming's been using his own name, thinking no one would find out.

BERLIN: Maybe Italy and Turkey are idiots, but I'm not! I swear!

BRER PHIL: Ok, Matt, you're not an idiot. You're a liar. Better?



CR FOXTROT -- FALL 1902

TURKISH EMPIRE EXPANDS WITH EASE, FRANCE FIGHTS BACK, ENGLISH TROOPS GO ON STRIKE

AUS (Armstrong): A Bud-Gal, A Vie S A Bud-Gal, A Ser S A Rum, A Rum S TURKISH A Arm-Sev, F Gre-Alb

ENG (Spurlock): NMR; **standby is Paul Milewski

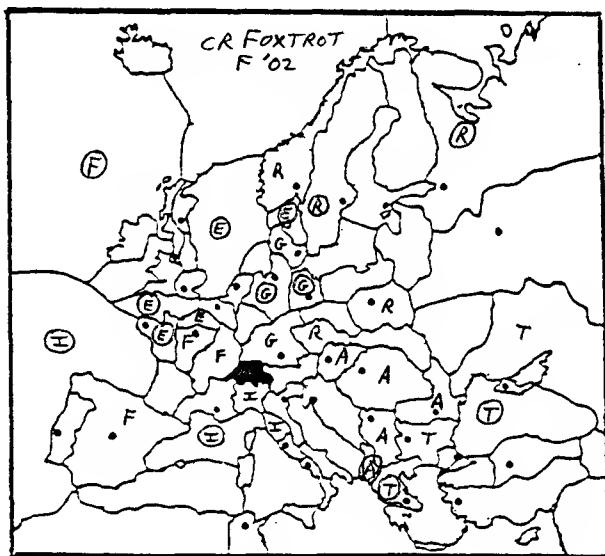
FRA (Weiss): A Par S A Mar-Bur, A Mar-Bur, A Spa-Mar, F Mid-Nat

GER (Klien): A Den S ENGLISH F Ska-Swe, A Mun H, A Bur-Par, F Hol-Kie, F Kie-Ber; **A Bur r-> Bel, Ruh?

ITA (Schultz): A Pie-Mar, A Ven-Tus, F Wes-Mid, F Tys-Lyo

RUS (Lord): A Nwy S F Swe, A Sev-Rum, A Boh-Gal, A War S A Boh-Gal, F Stp(nc) S A Nwy, F Swe S A Nwy; **A Sev r-> Ukr, Mos?

TUR (Engler): A Arm-Sev, A Bul S RUSSIAN A Sev-Rum, F Con-Bla, F Aeg-Gre



WAR CHILD -- FALL 1901

BIG BOUNCE IN BELGIUM, ITALIAN INFANTRYMEN VACATION IN TUNIS (MORE TO FOLLOW?)

AUS (Reid): A Bud H, A Ser S F Gre-Alb, F Gre-Alb

ENG (Marsicek): A Yor-Wal, F Nth-Bel, F Nws-Nwy

FRA (Mann): A Mar-Bur, A Bur-Bel, F Eng S A Bur-Bel

GER (Holley): A Mun-Bur, A Kic-Den, F Hol S ENGLISH F Nth-Bel

ITA (Diehl): A Apu-Tun, A Ven-Apu, F Ion C A Apu-Tun

RUS (Beckett): A Sev-Ukr, A Ukr-Rum, F Rum-Sev, F Bot-Swe

TUR (Sweeney): A Bul-Gre, A Arm S RUSSIAN A Ukr-Sev, F Con-Bla

Adjustments...

AUS (5): Home, Ser, Gre ...+2

ENG (4): Home, Nwy ...+1

FRA (3): Home ...+0

GER (5): Home, Den, Hol ...+2

ITA (4): Home, Tun ...+1

RUS (6): Home, Swe, Rum ...+2

TUR (4): Home, Bul ...+1

MOSCOW TO THE WORLD: I pay my respects to the other six great powers of Europe. May we have a fair game. (Ha! Ha!)

TURKEY TO AUSTRIA/RUSSIA: Please excuse me if I don't lay down and die!

We have another tricky situation here... Germany must retreat its A Bur to Bel or Ruh. If it's Ruh, then the adjustment information below is correct. If it's Bel, then England must disband a unit, but Germany would gain no builds since all of its supply centers are occupied. The English player (Spurlock or Milweski) should send orders next time as to which unit he wishes to disband if Germany retreats to Bel. All players can write conditional orders on Germany's retreat or England's potential disbandment. That's the way it works with combined seasons.

Adjustments...

AUS (5): Home, Ser, Rum, Gre ...+0

ENG (5): Home, Bre, Bel ...+0

FRA (4): Mar, Par, Por, Spa ...+0

GER (5): Home, Hol, Den ...+0

ITA (4): Home, Tun ...-0

RUS (5): Stp, Mos, War, Nwy, Swe, Rum, Sev ...-2

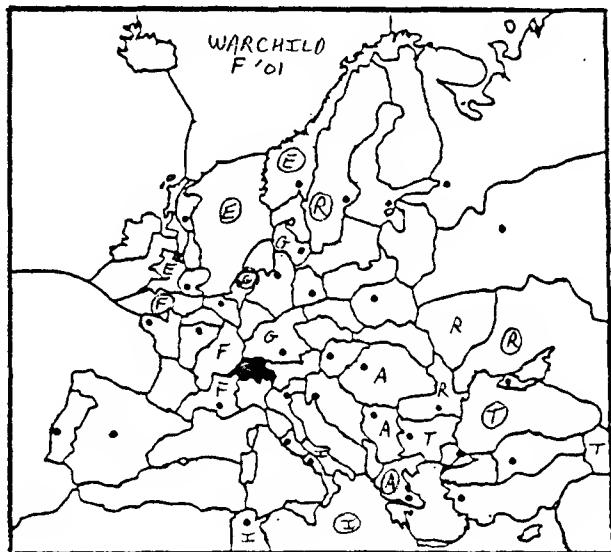
TUR (6): Home, Bul, Gre, Sev ...+2

PARIS: The Paris Underground welcomes the revolutionary government of Rome. It is hoped that this Schultz is neither a German posing as Caesar nor the father of Seargent Schultz of stalag-to-be.

PARIS TO LONDON: May the sun soon set on your malevolent empire.

PARIS TO BONN: May the Krupps crap out. You will roll out, not on.

VIENNA: I think playing the same country in two separate games may have been a bad idea. If there are any players out there who want to get into the Foxtrot game, my country is in good shape and has good relations with all but Russia (or at least it did when I last checked). Would anyone like to take over my position?



DATELINE CONSTANTINOPLE: Somewhere in a darkened room two radio operators desperately try to get hold of a secret agent known only as "Pink Dots". C'mon, Pink Dots, we're both in trouble!

PARIS TO ITALY: I think we had a similar agreement in another game. A safe south for France is a safe west for Italy. Viva Italy!

TURKEY TO THE WORLD: (Ahem...) HELP!!! (Thank you.)

ROME TO ANKARA: What's all that fleet movement vs. Italy for?

CONSTANTINOPLE: Sure looks like I'm in trouble with the terrible A/R alliance. I guess that I'll have to try this until someone can distract these guys from me.

CRAZED INSTITUTION -- SPRING 1901

GUNBOAT GAMES MAKE PLAYERS ALL THE MORE ADVENTURE SOME! (OR IS IT FOOLHARDY?)

AUS (Elmer Fudd): A Bud-Ser, A Vie-Gal, F Tri-Alb
ENG (Marmaduke): A Lpl-Yor, F Lon-Nth, F Edi-Nws
FRA (Skyler): A Par-Bur, A Mar-Spa, F Bre-Eng
GER (Roadrunner): A Mun-Ruh, A Ber-Kie, F Kie-Den
ITA (Droopy): A Rom-Ven, A Ven-Tri, F Nap-Ion
RUS (Mr. Magoo): A Mos-Stp, A War-Ukr, F Sev-Rum, F Stp(sc)-Bot
TUR (??????: A Con-Bul, A Smy-Arm, F Ank-Bla

TSAR TO HAPSBURGS: I will support your attack on Bulgaria in the fall or spring if Galicia is neutral.

ANONYMOUS: Russia anticipates Galicia and the Black Sea to be hotbeds of casualties this century.

TURKEY: Death to the Armenians!

ROADRUNNER: The German military-industrial complex offers to build *no new fleets* in return for a halt in English army conscription. Agreement and confirmation requested.

MOSCOW TO OSLO: Prepare for tents. Be nice to the boys and you can be peacefully occupied by the Tsar's army for the rest of the war.

EAST END DAILY: Tyrolia, Bohemia, Silesia, and Prussia have been unilaterally declared to be demilitarized zones. Co-ratification is welcomed.

TSAR TO KAISER: Sweetness is as sweetness does.

ANONYMOUS: German envoys are searching for means to cooperate with Turkish diplomats.

FRANCE TO ITALY: You stay on your side of the pond, and I'll stay on mine, ok?

ANONYMOUS: The Kaiser anticipates solidarity with all German-speaking peoples.

JOE PALOOKA TO BONN: I may be blonde, but I don't like blokes like you.

LA PARISIENNE: There exists a movement to preserve the peace and serenity of the Burgundy countryside, which seeks demilitarization.

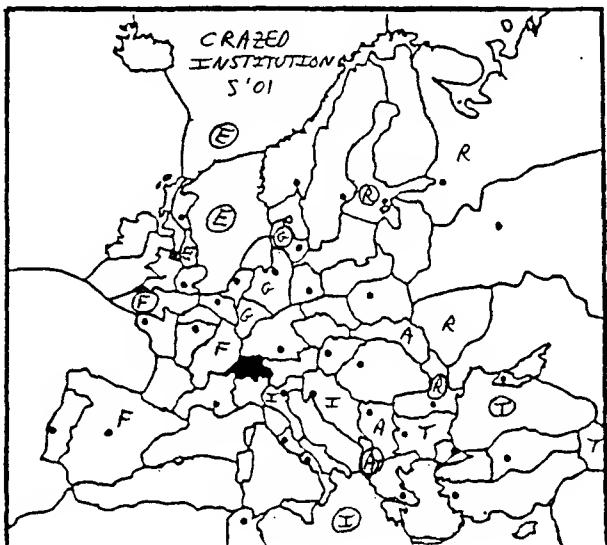
FRANCE TO GERMANY AND ENGLAND: Don't think of this as an attempt to take Belgium, but consider it a joint land-sea training mission. Yeah, that's the ticket! Just ask my wife, Morgan Fairchild...

BERLIN: The Kaiser perceives any move into the English Channel as a serious sign of friendship. All offers accepted!

MOSCOW TO THE ENGLISH CHANNEL: Whoever is swimming you is my friend. Good luck with our alliance.

TURKEY TO BRER PHIL: They're coming to take me away!

BRER PHIL TO TURKEY: And it's high time, too!



A REALLY BAD JOKE

(The First in a Series of Many More to Come)

Remember the Hunchback of Notre Dame? Well, it seems that Quasimodo was getting a little too old (and deaf) to be ringing those bells every day and night. So he decided to put out an ad in the town flyer, asking for people interested in taking over the job to come and see him in the bell tower.

Not long after that, one day Quasimodo was up in the tower and he heard a voice calling him from below. Looking out the window, he saw a hardy-looking young man, who shouted, "I'm here for the job." Quasimodo yelled back for the young man to enter the tower door and climb up the long, twisting stairs to better talk with him. Shortly the applicant appeared, and upon closer inspection he did appear to be well-suited for the job at hand. The young man said, "I know I can do a good job." Quasimodo replied, "Well, why don't you show me?"

The young man began to take a few steps back, an action that was indeed puzzling to the hunchback. "How are you going to pull the ropes?", Quasimodo wondered aloud. The young man said proudly, "Oh, I don't do it that way!" And with that, he ran toward the largest bell and struck it with his forehead! Quasimodo could not believe this, and the young man recoiled with a dull ring from the bell.

"Wait! Give me one more try!" the young man begged. Before the hunchback could say another word, the young man retreated to a greater distance, then launched himself directly at the bell until he struck it a second time with his forehead, issuing forth a resounding BOOM! Unfortunately, the recoil was so great that the young man was thrown backwards, off-balance, until he fell through the window behind him to the street below. "Punk," thought Quasimodo, and resumed the day's business.

Later that afternoon, another cry arose from the street: it was the constable shouting, "Quasimodo, are you aware that there is a dead man outside your tower?" Of course, the absent-minded Quasimodo had been too busy to pay any attention to the goings-on of the common folk, so he ventured downstairs to see what all the ruckus was about. Opening the door, the hunchback was dismayed to find a strange crumpled body lying at his doorstep. The constable asked, "Quasimodo, do you know this man?"

"No," he said, "but his face rings a bell."

A few days later, the hunchback was up in the tower eating lunch when a voice beckoned him from the street. Getting up, he saw that it was a muscular young man inquiring about the job. Quasimodo told him to come up to the tower.

"I know I can be really good at this if you give me a chance," the young man said. Before he could reply, Quasimodo watched the young man take a few steps back and charge the main bell, butting it with his head. After recoiling several steps, the young man rasped, "Wait, let me try again," and backed up to the opposite wall. Covering his eyes, Quasimodo heard the young man pound the floor as he ran toward the bell again, recoil with a loud BOOM!, and scream as he fell out the window set in the opposite wall. "Idiot," thought Quasimodo, and he returned to his lunch.

Later that afternoon, Quasimodo heard a vaguely familiar voice — the town constable, as it happened. "You had better come down here again, Quasi." So the hunchback climbed down the stairs to the street below, opening the door to find another strange crumpled body lying at his feet. The constable asked impatiently, "Well, do you know who *this* dead man is?"

"No," Quasimodo replied, "but he's a dead ringer for the first one."

THE BRIAR PATCH

One more time, for those of you who might have forgotten, this is the (soon to be realized) regular column in which I will present a bevy of topics, but likely one point of view (i.e. mine). Some may call it rambling liberal ideology, but then I'm a rambling liberal ideologist. So there will be few surprises in store.

On the other hand, I intend to print many of the responses I am bound to get because of the sensitive nature of these topics. Most people will usually have a strong opinion on any given subject, one way or the other. So don't hesitate to respond for or against the view presented here — *this is a forum for discussion*.

Without any further delay, I resume my sermon on the topic of...

ANIMAL RIGHTS

Two issues ago, when I began focusing on this issue, I made some seemingly farfetched connections between a greater respect for animals and such practices as deforestation, pollution, and the future of *all* life on earth. How can I possibly justify my argument of cause and result? Keep reading...

Everyone would agree that man is the most superior and highly developed animal on the planet. But just what does this mean? Does it serve only to make better clothing, homes, and transportation than the rest of the animal world has? Hopefully with this superiority comes a much heightened sense of the world around us and the basic sacredness of life itself, for what would all these material things mean if we as a people were not trying to achieve some loftier state of awareness, knowledge, and responsibility for a better world?

Animals are thinking and feeling creatures that deserve no less than we allow ourselves. We were at no higher level than they once, long ago. Does the fact that we are the only species to have written a Declaration of Independence or Bill of Rights give us sole claim to "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness"? I think not. Then the only difference is that we keep reminding each other of these rights, but who looks out for the other animals?

It can be nobody but ourselves. This is the responsibility that comes with being a superior animal. Under these rights, people are allowed to make their own decisions on matters concerning themselves personally. Most people shudder at the thought of denying one these basic rights. Then what justifies the denial of such rights to other animals?

Medical research involving the use of animals is a primary instigator of such atrocities, although I would draw a distinction between observation and experimentation. Few of us would object to dream analysis, for example, but who would be willing to contract AIDS and test the latest serum? I don't think any rat in his right mind would either. After all, this is a human problem, not a rat problem.

Many people see the kinds of animals involved in such research as an invaluable resource. But the nature of resources is to be depleted, eventually. In this case, I can't help but compare animals to something like petroleum, which we "burn up" to get from one place to another. Does that say that the end of greater medical knowledge justifies the means of killing these animals? What happens when there are no more animals?



Some researchers will argue that they are obtaining useful information from animals who are going to die anyway, pointing to the fact that many hospitals and medical laboratories buy animals from the local pound. This train of thought sounds vaguely reminiscent of the Nazi experimentors who performed all kinds of crimes upon their victims. Haven't we learned the faults of such reasoning? Next we'll be hearing proposals to conduct experiments on the people condemned to death in prison.

Yes, the human species is still a predatory one, and as such kills other animals to feed itself. Hey, I like a good steak as much as the next guy! This is a matter of survival, however, and I see nothing wrong with eating meat or going hunting and getting dinner with one's own hands. But hunting for "sport" — besides being an oxymoron, such a practice is outright disgusting and despicable.

As with the case of medical research (just one of a number of related problems), alternatives need to be found. The increase in computer technology offers laboratories a new avenue for exploration, which many say is just as valid and viable a methodology as animal research. I have no doubt that at some time in the future this abuse of animals will be viewed as barbaric and most regrettable, but, alas, irrevokable.

We need to change our view of the world around us. The increasingly better treatment of animals will inevitably lead to a better treatment of the environment, as well as a greater respect among fellow humans. The practice of deforestation, land development, and ultimate pollution will be curbed as a result of this change. No longer will flora and fauna be considered as expendable. Of course, difficult decisions will have to be made. But history has been full of difficult decisions. Society changes and so change the prevailing views of the time. It is easy for us to look back many years and examine the "turning points" in history, those which were beneficial and those which we wished had never happened. But the challenge is to foresee the latter and prevent them from ever occurring in the first place.

NEXT MONTH: GUN CONTROL!

RECORD RATINGS AND RAVINGS

As previously promised, what follows is my list of most memorable concerts I have been to in the last five years. They are memorable for many diverse reasons, as given below. The reviews don't reflect the artist's music per se, but their ability to put on a concert for \$15-\$25 bucks a pop per person. So in chronological order...

Hall & Oates, Feb. '85, Tampa Sun Dome — The Dome's first concert, and my first real one too. As expected, the crowd was large and the security was pitifully undertrained. As a result, I was easily able to sneak backstage after the concert and hang out with the band (Hall & Oates themselves rushed off in limos). A favorite for that reason.

Toto, Apr. '85, Sun Dome — Security was much better this time. The crowd was very small, but the band played great tunes from their current LP, *Isolation* (a real rockin' album). I sat in the second row center, and later a bunch of us got to go on stage and sing backup.

U2, May '85, Sun Dome — This was the *Unforgettable Fire* Tour. It's a concert I'll never forget. My first "general admission" experience, it took me the first half of the show to claw and bite my way off the floor (literally) packed with angry beer-swilling punks looking for a fight. The anger in the audience was palpable. How was the music? I really don't remember. Since then I have never gone to the floor of a "g-a" concert, even if I'm tenth in line.

Madonna, May '85, Sun Dome — OK, laugh if you will, but this may be my favorite concert to date. Three days after the harrowing experience with U2, I was shocked and delighted with this one. Although at the end of her tour, Madonna's voice was perfect, the music was excellent, the lights and dance routines amazing, and as if that wasn't enough, there was such an unmistakable "joy to be alive" feeling coming from everyone dancing in the aisles, the whole experience was overwhelming in a sense quite opposite to that of the previous concert.

Bryan Adams, May '85, St. Pete Bayfront Center — The only thing I remember about this one is that the music was consistently good, and the band played perhaps the longest set I've experienced (over 20 songs, really giving you your money's worth).

GTR, July '86, St. Pete. Bayfront Theater — This one is definitely in my top 3. The band played to an enthusiastic crowd fitting into a large movie theater. First, Steve Howe did a half-hour acoustical set, then played a few old Yes tunes with the whole band. Next, Steve Hackett lashed out with some electrical guitar solos, then relived some Genesis material with the band. Finally, as if all of that wasn't worth the whole price of admission, everyone played songs off the current album.

Bruce Hornsby and the Range, Jan. '87, Bayfront Theater — The other concert in my top 3. Sitting front row center was quite an experience considering an accordion-wielding 6+ foot Bruce Hornsby towering over you at the edge of the stage. The music was great, and the band was obviously having fun (and so were we).

Genesis, Feb. '87, Orlando Citrus Bowl — My first outdoor concert. No kidding, the threatening storm clouds moved away as soon as Phil Collins stepped upon the stage. I was lucky to see it on two counts: he was so far away (I was on the 50-yard line), and I had escaped with my life when trying to purchase tickets during the mob scene at the local record store earlier in the month. I'm disappointed that I remember little else, though.

Rush, Feb. '88, Lakeland Civic Center — Let's dispense with the formalities: Rush played ok, with lots of lasers and seemingly little original sound that didn't sound pre-recorded. The real surprise was the opening band, led by ex-Styx front-man Tommy

Shaw. Oh, his new tunes were pretty awful. But when they played those old Styx songs so true to the originals, it was sheer delight.

Steve Winwood, Aug. '88, Birmingham Oakwood Ampitheater — No, I didn't drive all this way to see him (I spent the summer in Huntsville 2 hours away). Another outdoor concert, but a much better one, just camping out on the side of a small hill overlooking the stage. The opening band, the South African-spawned Johnny Glegg and Savuka, was a pleasant surprise. A starry night, some old Traffic tunes, and a good friend made it a highlight of the summer.

FAVORITE SONGS OF THE MONTH:

"Hearts on Fire" — Steve Winwood

"She Drives Me Crazy" — Fine Young Cannibals

"I Won't Back Down" — Tom Petty

MOST EMBARRASSING FAVORITE SONGS OF THE MONTH:

"Boomchild" — Dennis DeYoung (*the guy from Styx with the funny voice!*)

"I Only Want To Be With You" — Samantha Fox (*need I explain?*)

CONTEST #5

First, a few picks from Contest #4, specifically baseball picks. Only a handful of people were courageous enough to look like fools by picking what each thinks will be this year's division and world series winners in major league baseball 1989. Actually, none are *that* bad, but there are a few surprises. And here they are:

Dave Munzenmaier: Cardinals, Astros, Brewers, Rangers. {Talk about a "reach"! This guy is from Houston — would you expect anything different? If Texas wins the series, I'll give Munz a lifetime subscription. (Don't bet on it; I'm too cheap!)}

Scott Beckett: Mets, Reds, Blue Jays, Athletics. {Hey, this guy is from Cincinnati! Boy, nothing like using a little objective analysis to pick a winner!}

David Orne: Pirates, Reds, Blue Jays, Athletics. {I think Dave took one too many racquetballs (sp!) to the head. The A's are the only solid choice he made — all of the other teams still have to prove themselves (and it won't be this year).}

Brad Wilson: Mets, Padres, Brewers, Athletics. {This I can stomach. The Padres are the big question mark.)}

Brer Phil (that's me): Mets, Dodgers, Brewers, Athletics. {The winning ticket! Please ignore the fact that I have never picked two correct numbers in the Florida Pick 6 Lottery.)}

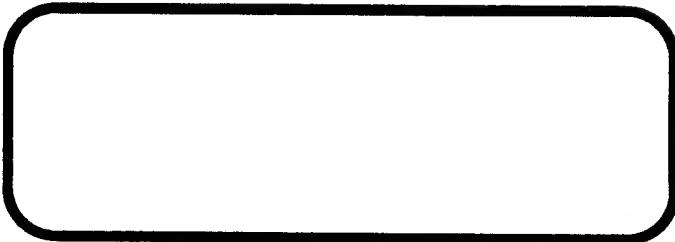
As for Contest #5, the task is to name the author and science fiction book title for each of the correctly matched pair of items from the list below. (But *you* must guess the right 10 pairs!)

1. Adam Reith	2. Wintermute	3. Meetpoint Station
4. Skinnies	5. Arrakis	6. Azmodeus Mogart
7. The Finn	8. Spicans, Mintakans, & Polarians	
9. J.T. McIntosh	10. Akkhtimakt	11. Rodger Young
12. Can-D	13. Puppeteers	14. Flint the Caveman
15. Baron Vladimir Harkonnen		16. Perky Pat Layouts
17. Kzinti	18. Paggetts	19. Tschai
20. "When the end of the world is near, spend the remaining time in a bar."		

PLAYER INFO

Last Name	First Name	Address	CityStateZip	Sby	Sub	Trade	
*	Armstrong	John	6732 Deep Creek Dr.	Prospect, KY 40059	*	?	← New Address
	Beckett	Scott	1005 Dana Ave. #12	Cincinnati, OH 45229		12/89	
	Cronin	Larry	5427 E. 19th St.	Tuscon, AZ. 85711		3/90	
	Diehl	Jim	10530 W. Riverview Dr.	Eden Prarie, MN 55347		3/90	
	Engler	Ken	P.O. Box 8211	Terre Haute, IN 47808	*	12/89	
	Grasse	Matthew	1871 Putnam Ave.	Ridgewood, NY 11385	*	12/89	
	Holley	Melinda	P.O. Box 2793	Huntington, WV 25727		*	
	Klien	Eric	1 Sinai Circle #B10	Chelmsford, MA 01824		12/89	
	Lord	Michael	4027 Baker Rd.	Minnetonka, MN 55343		12/89	
	Mann	George	1701 NW 81st Way	Plantation, FL 33322		*	
	Marsicek	Bob	407 Norwood West	Georgetown, TX 78628		10/89	
	Milewski	Paul	5642 Macey Ave. Apt#1	Cincinnati, OH 45227	*	12/89	
	Munzenmaier	David	707 El Dorado Blvd. #124	Houston, TX 77062		1/90	
	Nash	Tom	5512 Pilgrim Rd.	Baltimore, MD 21214		*	Address change as of May 21
	Orne	David	1234 Reynolds Rd. #242	Lakeland, FL 33801	*	1/90	
*	Phillips	William M	69 Woodgate Rd.	Ringgold, GA 30736		1/90	
*	Reid	John	20 Sunset Park	Upper Montclair, NJ 07043	*	12/89	← New address
	Schultz, #19390	John	Ind.St.Prison P.O.Box 41	Michigan City, IN 46360	*	4/90	
	Spurlock	Jeff	813 Rain Tree Pl.	Vista, CA 92084		?	
	Sweeney	Bob	635 Lake Shore Dr.	G.P.S., MI 48236		12/89	
	Todd	Gerald	8047 High Point Rd.	Baltimore, MD 21226		12/89	
	Weiss	Richard	554 Liberty St.	San Francisco, CA 94114		12/89	
	Wilson	Dave	3764 Bronx Blvd.	Bronx, NY 10467		12/89	
		Brad	P.O. Box 126	Wayne, PA 19087	*	*	
	vanDok	Frank	2745 Fenton St.	Edgewater, CO 80214		12/89	

Phil Reynolds
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 813-953-6952



Dipadeedoodah!